WAGING WAR ON DISHONEST EXPORTERS OF EUROPE

ONE Medical Officer of the Government Alone Has Prevented the Importation of Hundreds of Thousands of Dollars' Worth of Impure Food—Dangerous Drugs in Nearly All of the Goods Brought to This Country—Cheap Wines Substituted for Fine Vintages Under Counterfeit Labels—Vegetables and Preserves Colored With Poisonous Dyes

THOUGH the cargo analyzing portion of the Bureau of Chemistry of the Department of Agriculture has been in active operation with a law behind it only since August, the head of the bureau, Prof. Harvey W. Wiley, and his chief assistant, Dr. W. D. Bigelow, have made some startling discoveries concerning the extent and methods of adulterations of food sent to the United States from Germany, France, Italy, and the other states of Europe.

They have learned that all kinds of poisonous drugs are used to preserve foods, that cheap wines and oils are substituted for better grades, and that all kinds of such deceptions have been practiced upon the consumer in the United States.

As soon as these facts were established Prof. Wiley and his assistants began to turn back cargoes of adulterated food to the ports from which they came, and it is said that since the beginning of the work in August no less than $500,000 worth of adulterated food has been returned to Europe. It was learned by the investigators that the greatest sufferers from the adulteration of wine have been the cities of Washington, New York, and Boston, as they consume most of the wine imported into the United States.

The method of procedure against suspected exporters and importers has been reduced in the few months to a perfect system. When a cargo reaches any port in the United States copies of the invoices are sent with samples by the collector of the port to the appraiser of the port. The latter forwards the invoices and samples to the Treasury Department at Washington, which, in turn, sends them to the Bureau of Chemistry.

The cargo is held either in a bonded warehouse or in the ships until the samples have been analyzed, when if there is any adulteration found the cargo is refused admission, and it has to be sent to some other country. There are naturally many protests against the decisions of Prof. Wiley and his assistants, but so far the protests have availed nothing. If adulterations have been found nothing can get the cargo into the United States.

The result of this rigid rule has been to do away with the secret adulterations. The law, however, is weak in some respects, as it permits the importation of adulterated foods if the goods are marked as being adulterated. Thus nearly all of the peas imported from France are known to be colored the brilliant green which distinguishes them by means of a preparation of copper, which is known to be hurtful. The bureau, however, has kept a close watch upon this class of goods, and it is going to be only a matter of time before they are going to be refused admission also.

It is in wines that the bureau has been doing the most work, and it is said that this branch of the work was developed as a result of the action of the authorities at the French exposition, who refused to allow the California vintners to display their wines, the allegation being made that they were wrongly marked.

Thus all of the "Burgundies," the "Bordeaux," and other wines named after the provinces in France from which the vines came were thrown out. Prof. Wiley, who was present, protested against this ruthless discrimination, but without result. He said at the time that there would be reprisals, and no sooner had he returned to the United States than a warfare was begun upon the swindles which had for years been perpetrated upon the consumers in the United States by the wine houses abroad. In discussing his crusade Prof. Wiley said:

"We want agents at Mayence, in Germany, and maybe at Hamburg, which is one of the great ports, and probably one in Italy. I do not think it would be necessary to have one in Spain, because our imports from there are not sufficiently great.

"The Secretary, at my suggestion, three years ago, sent a special agent to Europe to see if it were necessary that such an inspection should be made, and he went to France, and the testimony which we collected is something surprising. The Secretary, very wisely, I think, never published this, because it was confidential; but it is the universal practice, as it was learned from this agent, to misbrand and mislabel, and I have brought with me some illustrations of it.

"You take the wines of these countries—of the Rhine and the Moselle and the Gironde, the great wine-producing region of the world. In France there are about thirty-eight vineyards that have the right under the government to bear a special name. They are called classed vineyards, or classed wines, and have the right to bear certain names. Every wine almost that we get in this country bears one of those names. The same is true of the Rhine and of the Moselle.

"There are certain vineyards which, under the authority of the government, have a right to bear particular names. As I have said, nearly all the wines we get bear those names. We know very well that most of the wines are not entitled to bear those names, do not come from those vineyards; but we cannot prove it. If we undertook to say that these were violations of the law, we would have to have evidence; we would have to prove it.

"When we find a cargo that is wrong we give the man time to introduce evidence; we condemn no man without a hearing. We have had a great many cases where men have presented evidence and a few in which they have secured different verdicts or modifications. The evidence is usually this: 'Our firm has been established for 150 years and has never before been charged with selling an adulterated article.' We do not accept that evidence against our own analysis. Then when we insist upon our position and finally convince them that our analysis of their goods is correct they write that they have found that our analysis is correct and that their own chemist has found it so, but it was adulterated accidentally.

"There are two kinds of adulteration of wine. One we have not touched at all and the other is the chemical adulteration. That is, the addition of preservatives. Now, the old Latins were accustomed to hang up before every wine house a green bush to show that there was wine for sale. Hence the origin of the term, 'A good wine needs no bush,' because when you find where good wine is sold people go there anyway.

"So the advertising of the purity of a wine is a stock in trade which should be safeguarded by the persons who are entitled to use it, and a good wine does not only need no bush but it needs no preservative. So we are perfectly confident by actual experience that the preservatives are added to the wines which are so poor in quality that they will not bear transportation without such preservatives.

"Hence the presence of a preservative in wine, aside from the fact that it is injurious to health in itself, is an indication that the wine itself is of inferior quality. Therefore, especially in countries where the laws forbid it—that is, France and Germany, and those are the great wine countries—preservatives are not used, and we do not allow any wines to come into this country that have a preservative in them, except in one case. There is one case where we do allow a preservative to be used in wines, and that is the case of white wines, where the universal treatment has been for years to burn sulphur in the cask before the wines are put in. That is the universal practice in the case of certain white wines of the Sauterne type and others, not only in Italy but in France and in Spain, and also in California.

"We have determined by analysis just how much sulphurous acid is introduced in the wine by that process, and then we have fixed a standard, under authority of Congress that allows the Secretary of Agriculture to do so, above the maximum which we have found, so that we certainly include all genuine cases of wines that are made in this way. We admit that much sulphurous acid as a correct trade practice.

"We find only 6 or 7 milligrams—to use an expression we are familiar with, and which is allowed by act of Congress now, of sulphurous acid or dioxide—the fumes of burning sulphur; that is what it is—in 100 cubic centimeters. That is about an ordinary glass of wine, such a drink as would ordinarily be taken by a man, in a small wine glass; that is the maximum found when wines are treated this way. But we have fixed our standard, following the Swiss and Austrian and German standards, at 20 milligrams, which allows a wide latitude. Now, if white wines come in with more than 20 milligrams to 100 cc. we exclude them, because it is evident that the sulphur has been put in there in a different way from the legitimate treatment, put in there for the purpose of preserving a poor stuff.

"We have found 60 or 70 or 80 milligrams in 100 cc.; that is we have found the wine almost saturated with the sulphurous dioxide; you can smell and taste sulphur in it, and it is unfit for use.

"Another import that causes us a lot of trouble is sausage, of which there are great quantities brought into the United States in various kinds of cans and in brine in barrels. We cannot do much with this sort of stuff because we cannot inspect the carcass from which the sausage is made, and to try to inspect the sausage after it has been made is practically impossible, because you know we would have to inspect every part. For instance one does not know where the trichina is to be found, but one does in a carcass. In some, however, we have found evidences of preservatives that are injurious, and as a result we have sent out of the United States a number of cargoes.

"These cargoes, so far as we know, are still at sea as they cannot be taken back to Germany, although they come from there. The Germans decline to admit into their country any kind of meat in pieces smaller than eight pounds. Once the sausage leaves Germany it can never go back. It is probable that the cargoes have been taken to English or South American ports.

"The canned vegetables and fruits we get we find largely adulterated; we get a great deal of that kind of food from Europe. We find that the use of glucose is quite common in those fruits, and artificial colors are used almost universally. As far as glucose is concerned, we do not intend to raise the question that it is injurious to health, provided it is made in accordance with the provisions imposed in the country where it is manufactured. But when it is not manufactured in the right way there is likely to be some such result as happened in England several years ago where they poisoned 8,000 people, 600 of whom died and a great many were injured permanently for life, by reason of the arsenic which the glucose contained. This glucose being used in the manufacture of food products, I should insist rigidly always on the examination of these articles for arsenic, before they were allowed to come into the country. But unless they are named on the label they are misbranded and could not come in under the law.

"Then, as I have said, they are almost universally artificially colored. The use of artificial colors is a matter of taste, and we reserve our decision in regard to injury to health in all these cases for future consideration, but unless the label specifies that they are artificially colored, and says what they are colored by, we exclude them on the ground that they are mislabeled. We are turning away daily many shipments of all kinds of food, and we manage to discover most of the adulterations. We find, however, that pure articles are being imported and are being adulterated on this side of the ocean."

PROF. HARVEY W. WILEY.

DR. W. D. BIGELOW.

Startling Discoveries Made by Prof. Wiley

That fully 50 per cent of all foreign imports have been adulterated with dangerous drugs.

Cargoes of sausages have been turned back to Germany because they contained poisonous preservatives.

Olive oil has been mixed with peanut, sesame, and other ingredients to cheapen it at the expense of the consumer's health.

Very few of the best wines come to this country from France and Germany except in special cargoes to private individuals.

Exporters deliberately counterfeit labels of the chateaux, filling bottles with poor products of the vineyards.

Nearly all vegetables are colored with dangerous matter, peas, beans and similar canned goods being adulterated with preparations of copper.

Often a good quality of wine is sent to the Government chemists of Germany and Italy or France, which is tested to be all right, the exporters receiving a certificate under which cheaper wines are sent to the United States.

Cottonseed oils are shipped to Europe and returned to the United States as olive oil, and much California wine goes abroad which, it is believed, is sent back to this country after being mixed with French and Italian wines.

Champagnes were found as a rule pure because of the necessity of fermentation in the bottles, though much of it is re-enforced with alcohol and charged with carbonic gases.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

For the first half of the fiscal year ending January 14 the Bureau of Chemistry has analyzed 1,186 samples from cargoes.

In one hundred and four cargoes dangerous adulterations were found in the goods examined, and most of them were ordered away from the United States.

The approximate value of the goods refused admission is placed at a quarter of a million dollars, the greatest losers being France, Germany, and Italy.

Adulterations have been cut down one-half by the activity of the bureau, old offenders coming to the conclusion that it is no use attempting to get cargoes into the country.

Dishonest exporters, however, have commenced shipping pure goods into the United States and deliberately sending with them the materials for adulteration, the mixing being done in the United States.

Government officers being powerless to stop this dangerous practice because there is no national food law, the work of the bureau is being nullified rapidly.

THE OLD BLAINE HOUSE, A TOMB OF POLITICAL DREAMS

(Continued from Third Page.)

in the hour of organization for decisive battle."

Lincoln's friends thought to conciliate Seward by executive preferment. The President-elect thought to follow precedent and obtain a fine counselor at the same time by making Seward his Secretary of State. All Republicans felt the need for placating New York. So Seward was asked almost at the outset to enter the Cabinet of the man who had beaten him.

To a man like Seward the prospect was dreadfully discouraging. He was college bred; Lincoln was the plainest of the plain. He was a national figure; Lincoln was unknown. More than all else, he was the defeated aspirant; Lincoln, the very man he was asked to serve, was the victor.

Seward has explained his acceptance. After a reference to an unsuccessful effort to become surrogate in 1828 he said:

"I resolved thenceforth upon no consideration other than the safety of the State ever to seek or accept a trust conferred by executive authority. That case occurred later, when I, with extreme reluctance, and from conviction of public duty, took the office of Secretary of State at the beginning of the civil war and filled it until the restoration of peace."

As Seward took the post "from a conviction of public duty," it is not surprising that he entered the Cabinet with a high sense of his own dignity. Indeed, if we are to believe various memoirs, he expected to control both the Cabinet and the President. Why not? He was the greatest figure in the party and the President had been one of the least. He even undertook to edit Lincoln's inaugural address. That was the first "citation" in this tragedy of Seward's ambition—his entry into Lincoln's Cabinet "from a conviction of public duty." The second was a realization that Lincoln meant to be the boss.

The Rodgers house received its distinguished tenant just before Lincoln's inauguration. Across through the bare trees of Lafayette Park Seward could see the house he had expected to occupy. The view must have made the situation particularly bitter when he realized, as soon as did realize, that Lincoln meant to speak his inaugural address as he chose, and not as the new Secretary of State desired.

That was the beginning. Seward had come to this house the greatest figure in the Republican party. His first experience in it was an extreme humiliation. When he left it he had been branded "traitor" and "deserter" by every wing of his party, and nearly every man in every wing.

Nine years Seward passed in and out of this house on his way to serve Lincoln or on his way home. He grappled with big problems in those days—the possible intervention of European countries in the war with the South; the difficulties which arose over the seizure of Mason and Slidell; the controversy over the Alabama and the claims which grew out of that vessel's wonderful activity; the difficulties which arose between Lincoln's administration and the government of Lord Palmerston; the French evacuation of Mexico and the execution of Maximilian; the purchase of Alaska and half a dozen treaties for the acquisition of other territory.

For five of these nine years the glory for all Seward's achievements went first to the credit of Lincoln. For the remaining four years the discredit of all Seward's failures rested chiefly on Seward's own shoulders; and all that discredit is due, when all is said and done, to an earnest desire to fulfill the purposes of the dead Lincoln as Seward understood them, and, with Johnson, endeavored to execute them.

Political eminence and ability as a publicist did not figure prominently in the public mind those days. The election of Lincoln, by common consent meant war, and war meant in turn the exploitation of the warrior over the statesman. A sign of this was offered both Lincoln and Seward soon after the two had assumed their offices in the Government.

Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant" opponent of Lincoln in Illinois, died at Chicago, in June, 1861. Douglas had rivaled Seward in the public esteem. He was known far and wide as a wonderfully brilliant speaker, and a resourceful statesman. If rumor was to be believed, he and Lincoln had, moreover, been contestants in more than one field. Through half a dozen years of their early life the two had paid court to Mary Todd, the gracious and lovely daughter of Robert S. Todd, esq., of Louisville. Lincoln won in that contest, as he seemed to win everywhere. When once the rebellion had begun, he found he had the support, not of the rival in his own party, alone, but of the chief figure in the opposition party. Yet the news of Douglas' death was swallowed up in the gathering clouds of the war.

As the years of the rebellion lengthened, Lincoln's greatness came more and more to be appreciated. Proportionately Seward's eminence came to be more and more a thing of the past. It was Seward who wrote the memorable instructions for Minister Adams on that official's departure for London, but it was Lincoln who controlled its substance. It was Seward who did the fighting to keep England and Europe neutral during the war, but it was Lincoln who directed the fight. It was Seward who supplied the form, in short, for half the notable measures of the Lincoln Administration, but it was Lincoln, who supplied the matter, and the people of the North were not slow to understand the situation.

So great a man could not continue long in such a service unannoyed by gossip. From the first it was rumored he and Lincoln had quarreled and the more loyal Seward became the more persistent were the stories that he was to retire from the Cabinet in a huff. Every brigadier who strutted the streets of the dingy city had heard the story from some member of Congress who "had served with Seward." Every member of the city's social circles—a society almost unanimous in its dislike for the Republicans in general and Lincoln in particular—openly expressed the hope that the story might be true. A manly purpose to put an end to these reports completed Seward's subordination to the "colorless and unknown man from Illinois."

In December, 1862, a caucus was held of the Republican Senators who favored Lincoln and who thought Seward disloyal to the President. At that caucus, composed almost exclusively of men who had once looked up to Seward as a leader, resolutions were adopted asking the removal of the Secretary of State. Seward met the situation with characteristic spirit. He at once gave out a statement, and that statement said unequivocally that he "was content to remain where he was so long as the war continued and the President required it; but would not prolong his stay one hour beyond the time when the President should think it wise to relieve him."

Two years and a half later Seward was nearly martyred for his loyalty. He had already lost his leadership. He was now narrowly to miss losing his life.

The return to the North of the victorious armies, the devastation of the South, the general unrest pending the disbandment of the troops and the dismay of the Confederates moved half a dozen men to plan an overthrow of the Government by the assassination of its chief figures—Lincoln, Seward, Johnson, and either Stanton or Grant. These conspirators attempted first to abduct Lincoln. Failing in that, they fixed upon the middle of April as the time to assassinate him and his chief counselors.

At about that time Seward was thrown from his carriage and severely injured. When taken to Commodore Rodgers' elegant house it was found he had broken his arm and both his jaws. On the night of the accident his jaws were bound in iron bandages, and all through the long march of the soldiers past the White House he lay in his room, with the light shut out and his jaws bound tight in excruciating pain. Sherman is said to have left the line to salute the house, but the impressive figure whom the general thought thus to honor lay inside unconscious.

On the night of April 14 an unkempt, powerful man pushed the door open and asked imperiously to see Mr. Seward. He carried medicine and a message, he said, from Seward's physician, Dr. Verdi. There was a parley, then the assassin dashed past, struck down Seward's son, overpowered the man nurse, and finding he had broken his pistol in the scrimmage, stabbed at the sick man again and again.

The outcry was almost lost in the convulsions which swept over the city with the news that Lincoln had been shot. It was at first reported that Seward was dead. Two days later it was known that he might live. The next day brought the news that the assailant, Lewis Payne Powell, had been taken at the house of Mrs. Surratt, in H Street. In a day or two more it developed that Seward's greatest injury was a deep stab-wound in the face, and that only the iron bandages had saved him from death.

This was the beginning of the end. When Seward recovered he was so emaciated that a woman was able to carry him into the air. With the return of his strength he set about the last great work of his career—the fulfillment of Lincoln's purposes as to the Southern States. The outcome is familiar history. He alone of all Lincoln's supporters had remained for the second Cabinet, and he alone of them all shared the contumely showered on Johnson for following the lines Lincoln had laid down. The end of the administration found Seward a physical wreck, and his political career irrevocably ended. The very men who sought to nominate him eight years before now classed him with Johnson and called him traitor.

He undertook to travel, for fear, he said, that rest might mean rust. In two years he returned from a triumphal tour of the world, wherein he was the recipient of honors at that time unknown to Americans, and retired to his old home in Auburn. There, on October 10, 1872, among his books and papers, he died sane and sensible, with the glitter still in his eye, and his head still proudly poised on his thin shoulders. The tragedy of his service for Lincoln in Commodore Rodgers' elegant house had ended at last.